

ITALIA-ESPAÑA

G
U
Á
R
D
E
S
E

C
O
M
O

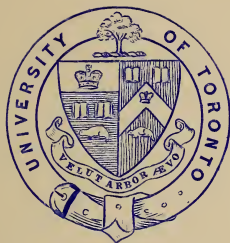


J
O
Y
A

P
R
E
C
I
O
S
A

EX-LIBRIS

M. A. BUCHANAN



PRESENTED TO

THE LIBRARY

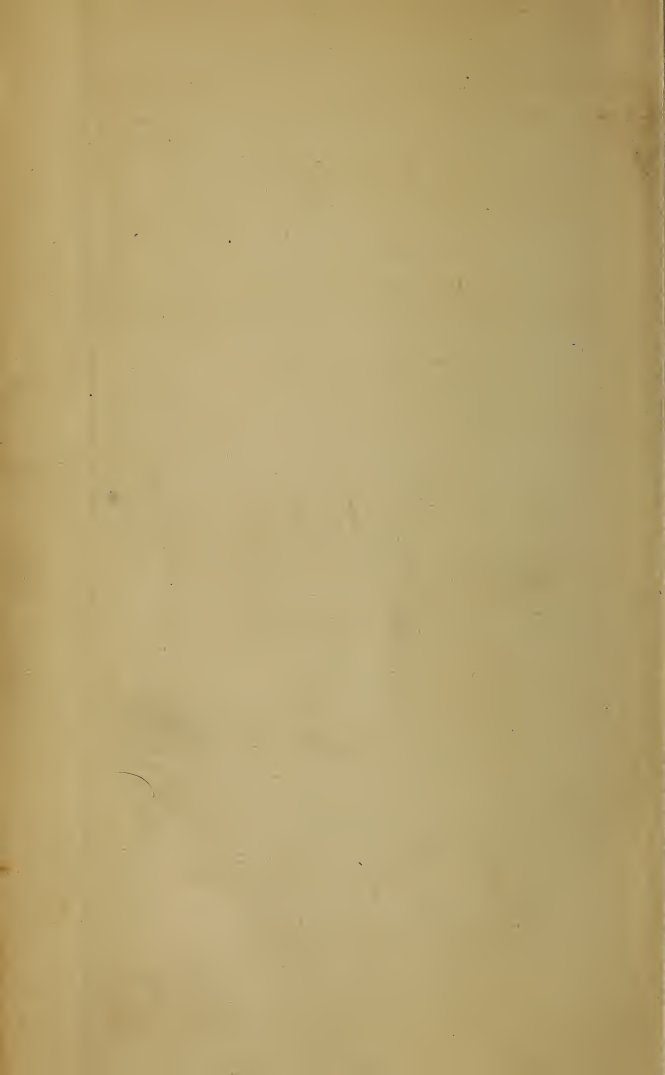
BY

PROFESSOR MILTON A. BUCHANAN

OF THE

DEPARTMENT OF ITALIAN AND SPANISH

1906-1946



[Chap books and penny histories,
second series, comprising
notorious characters, highwaymen and burglars.]

L.E.C

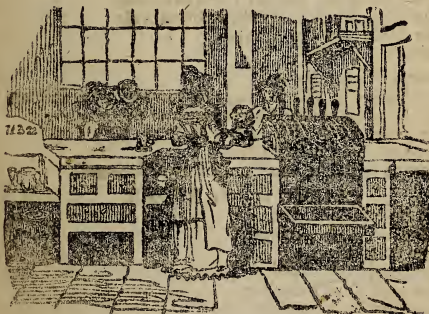
C4636

LIFE

JACK SHEPPARD

THE NOTORIOUS

House and Gaol Breaker.



NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE:
BOWMAN, PUBLISHER, NUNS' LANE.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

461703
5-47

PENNY HISTORIES,

Crown 12mo. Three or upwards sent post free to any address, on receipt of stamps to the amount.

- 1 The Golden Dreamer
- 2 Mother Bunch's Fortune-Teller
- 3 Napoleon's Book of Fate
- 4 Watty and Meg
- 5 The Dreamer's Oracle
- 6 Jane Shore
- 7 The Generous Man
- 8 Dick Turpin, the Highwayman
- 9 Mary the Maid of the Inn
- 10 Shepherdess of the Alps and Count Flanders
- 11 A Voyage in the Coal Trade
- 12 The Hermit of Warkworth
- 13 The Life of George Buchanan
- 14 The Life of the Earl of Derwentwater
- 15 The Long Pack, a Northumbrian Tale
- 16 The Maid and the Magpie
- 17 Robinson Crusoe
- 18 George Barnwell
- 19 The Lambton Worm, and the Cowed Lad of Hilton
- 20 The New Guide to Matrimony
- 21 The Life of Jack Shepherd
- 22 The Battle of Chevy Chase
- 23 Shamus O'Brien, the Bould Boy of Glingall

PENNY SONG BOOKS

- 1 The Sailors' Songster
- 2 The Cork Leg Songster
- 3 Burns' Songster
- 4 The Banjo Songster
- 5 Free and Easy Songster
- 6 The Skylark Songster
- 7 The Blackbird Songster
- 8 The Thrush Songster
- 9 The Irish Songster
- 10 The Popular Songster
- 11 The Quaver
- 12 Jenny Lind Songster
- 13 The Harmonist
- 14 The English Songster
- 15 Songs of the Village
- 16 Scottish Songster
- 17 The Emigrant Songster
- 18 The Wreath Songster
- 19 Old Dog Tray Songster

THE LIFE OF JACK SHEPPARD.

JOHN SHEPPARD was born in the parish of Stepney near London, in the year 1702. The father of this extrardornay character was a carpenter, and died when his son was so young, that he had no recollection of seeing him. In consequence of the premature death of his father, the providing for Jack, his brother, and sister, devolved upon his mother, who soon procured him admission into the workhouse in Bishopgate-street, where he continued for eighteen months, and in that time received an education sufficient to qualify him for the trade of a carpenter, for which his mother designed him. Accordingly he was recommended to Mr. Wood, in Wych Street, Drury Lane, who bound him for seven years. The lad proved an early proficient, and became exceedingly ingenious. He soon became master of his business, and gave much satisfaction to his master's customers, and had the character of a very sober, orderly boy.

It was for the fall of

completed six years of his apprenticeship, he commenced a fatal acquaintance with one Elizabeth Lyon, otherwise called Edgeworth Bess, from a town of that name in Middlesex, where she was born, the reputed wife of a soldier, who lived a debauched life. Jack became soon enamoured of her, and they cohabited together as man and wife.

Here began his ruin. Sheppard grew weary of the yoke of servitude and began to dispute with his master, telling him that this way of jobbing from house to house, was not sufficient to furnish him with a due experience in his trade, and that if he would not seek to undertake some building, he would go into the world for better information. Mr. Wood, a mild, honest man, indulged him. Mrs. Wood exhorted him against the company of his paramour.

He was sent to make some repairs at Mr. Britt's, the Sun alehouse, near Islington, and on a trival occasion fell upon his master, and beat and bruised him in a barbarous and shameful manner, such a sudden and deplorable change was there in the behaviour of so promising a young man. Next ensued a neglect of duty both to God and his master; lying out of nights, perpetual jarring and animosities. These acts were the consequence of his intimacy with his new acquaintance, who, in the sequel, will appear to have been a main loadstone

in bringing him to the fatal tree.

Having reason to suspect that Sheppard had robbed a neighbour, Mr. Wood began to be in a great fear for himself; when his man came not home in due season at night, he barred him out; but he made a mere jest of the locks and bolts, and entered in and out at pleasure; and when all had reason to believe he was locked out, they found him in bed the next morning; such was the power of his early ingenuity.

Edgeworth Bess having stolen a gold ring from a gentleman whom she had picked up in the street, was sent to St. Gile's round house. Sheppard went immediately to his friend, and after a short discourse with Mr. Brown, the beadle, and his wife, who had the care of the place, he fell upon the poor couple, took the keys from them, and let Bess out in spite, of all the outcries and opposition they were capable of making.

He was sent by his master in July, 1723, to perform a repair at the house of Mr. Baynes, a piece-broker in White-horse yard, and he from thence stole a roll of fustain, containing twenty four yards, which was afterwards found in his trunk. This is supposed to be the first robbery he ever committed, and it was not long before he repeated another upon this same gentleman, by breaking into his house about the middle of the night, and

taking out of the till seven pounds in money and goods to the value of seventeen pounds more. How he entered this house was a secret, till his being committed to Newgate, when he confessed that he took up the iron bars at the cellar window; and after he had done his business, he nailed them down again; so that Mr. Baynes never believed that his house had been broken, and a woman, a lodger in the house, was blamed all the while for committing the robbery.

Shepard and his master had parted ten months before the expiration of his apprenticeship, and a melancholy parting it was; he went from good and careful patronage, and lay exposed to the temptations of the most wicked wretches the town could afford, such as Joseph Blake, alias Blueskin,—Dowling James Sykes, alias Hell and Fury, and which last was the first that betrayed and put him into the hands of justice.

Having deserted his master's service he took shelter in the house of Mr. Charles, in May-fair, and his landlord having occasion for some repairs in his house, engaged a Mr. Panton, a carpenter, to undertake it, and Sheppard to assist him as a journeyman. But, on the 28th of October, 1728, before the work was completed, Sheppard took an opportunity to rob the people of the following effects: viz. £7 10s. in specie, five large silver

9

spoons, six plain forks, four tea spoons, six plain gold rings, and a cypherring, four suits of wearing apparel, besides linen to a considerable value. This fact he confessed to the Rev. Mr. Wagstaff before his escape from the condemned cell.

Sheppard's brother Thomas, a carpenter by profession, though a notorious thief and housebreaker by practice, being committed to Newgate for breaking open the house of Mrs. Cook, a linen draper in Clare market, on the 5th of February, and stealing goods to the amount of £60, impeached his brother John and Edgeworth Bess, as being concerned with him in this act; and these three were charged with being concerned in breaking into the house of Mr. Phillips, in Drury lane, and stealing some property of Mrs. Kendrick, a lodger in the house, on the 14th of the said month of February. All possible endeavours were used by Mrs. Cook and Mr. Phillips to get John Sheppard and Edgeworth Bess apprehended, but to no purpose, till the following accident.

Robbery was now the summit of his ambition, and by night and day his constant meditation, and in London he found good opportunity for gratifying his utmost desires in this way. While in his usual avocation, he one day met with his old acquaintance Jame Sykes, and was invited by him to go to Sedgate's victualling house at 11

Dials, to play at skittles, Sheppard complied, and Sykes secretly sent for Mr. Price, a constable in St. Giles's parish, and charged his friend Sheppard with robbing Mrs. Cook. Sheppard was carried before Justice Parry, who ordered him to St. Giles' round-house till the next morning, for further examination. He was confined in the upper part of the place, being two stories from the ground; but before two hours, by only the help of a razor and the stretcher of a chair, he broke open the top of the round house; and tying together a sheet and a blanket, by them descended into the churchyard and escaped leaving the parish to repair the damage, and repent the affront put upon his skill and capacity.

On the evening of the 19th of May, Sheppard, with another robber named Benson, were passing through Leicester fields, where a gentleman stood accusing a woman with an attempt to steal his watch. A mob gathered about the disputants. Sheppard's companion got in among them, and picked the gentleman's pocket in earnest of his watch. The scene was now changed from an imaginary robbery to a real one; and in a moment ensued an outcry of 'stop thief!' Sheppard and Benson took to their heels, but the former was seized by a sergeant of the guard at Leicester house, crying out 'stop thief!' with great zeal.

He was conveyed to St. Ann's round-house, 110 Soho, and kept secure till the next morning, when Edgeworth Bess came to visit him, who was seized also. They were carried before Justice Walker, when the people in Drury-lane and Clare-market appeared, and charged him with the robberies before-mentioned; but Sheppard pretending to impeach certain accomplices, the justice committed them to the New Prison, with an intent to have them removed to Newgate, unless there came from them some useful discoveries. Sheppard was now a second time in the hands of justice; but Jack knew his trade too well to remain long in such a thralldom.

He and his mate were now in a strong and well guarded prison, himself loaded with a pair of double links and basils, of about 14lbs. weight, and confined together in the safe apartment, called Newgate Ward. Sheppard conscious of his crimes, and knowing the information he had made to be but a blind scheme that would avail nothing, began to meditate an escape. They had been thus detained four days, and their friends having the liberty of seeing them, furnished him with implements proper for his design. Accordingly Sheppard went to work, and on the 25th May, being Whitsunday, at about two o'clock in the morning, completed a practicable breach, and sawed off his

fetters; having, with unheard-of diligence and dexterity cut off an iron bar from the window, and took out a mullion or bar, of the most solid oak, about nine inches in thickness, by boring it through in many places with great skill and labour. They had still twenty-five feet to descend. Sheppard fastened a sheet and blanket to the bars, caused madam to take off her gown and petticoat, and sent her out first. She being more corpulent than himself, it was with much difficulty he got her through the opening, but, on observing his directions, she was instantly down more frightened than hurt. Our hero followed, and alighted with ease and pleasure. But where are they escaped to? Why, out of the prison into another. The reader is to understand that the New Prison and Clerkenwell Bridewell lie contiguous to each other, and they had got into the yard of the latter, and had a wall of twenty-two feet high to scale before their liberty was perfected. Sheppard, far from being unprepared to surmount this difficulty, had his gimlet and pincers ready, and made a scaling ladder. While the keepers and prisoners of both places were asleep in their beds, he mounts with his lady, and in less than ten minutes carries both her and himself over the wall, and completes an entire escape. Although his escape from the condemned hole in Newgate made a far greater noise in the world than that from the New Prison, it has been allowed by all the gaol-keepers in London, that one so extraordinary was never performed in England before. The broken chairs and bars are kept in the New Prison to testify and preserve the memory of this act.

Sheppard, not warned by his late dangerous position, was more set to work in his master's neighbourhood, in York-street, and conceals measures with one Anthony

Lamb, an apprentice with Mr. Carter, a mathematical instrument maker, for robbing Mr. Burton, a master tailor, who lodged in Mr. Carter's house. Charles Grace, a cooper, being into the secret, consented, and resolved to act his part on the 16th of June, the day appointed, Lamb let Grace and Sheppard into the house at midnight, and they all went up to Mr. Burton's apartment armed with pistols, and entered undisturbed. Grace was posted at Burton's bed side with a loaded pistol, with positive orders to shoot him through the head in case he awoke. Sheppard being engaged in opening the trunks and boxes meantime. It luckily happened for Mr. Burton that he slept more sound than usual that night, having come from a merry making with some friends. They carried off in notes, bonds, guineas, and clothes, made and unmade, to the value of between £290 and £300, besides a paduasoy suit of clothes, worth about £20 more, which having been made for a corpulent gentleman, Sheppard had them reduced and fitted to his size and wear, designing to appear and make figure in the *beau monde*. Grace and Sheppard having disposed of their goods at an alehouse in Newton-or's lane (a rendezvous for robbers and ruffians), took their flight, and Grace was not heard of after. Lamb was apprehended, and carried before Justice Newton, and made an ample confession: and there being nothing but that against him at his trial, he came off with sentence of transportation. He, as well as Sheppard, confirmed all the above particulars, and with fearful addition, that it was a matter of dispute among themselves, whether or not every individual in the house should not be sacrificed.

Mr. Kneebone, a woollen draper in the Strand, about the latter end of the same month, (June), received a caution from the father of Anthony Lamb, who intimated to Mr.

Kneebone, that his house was intended to be broken open and robbed that very night. Mr Kneebone prepared for the event, ordered his servants to sit up and give directions to the watchman in the street to observe his house. About two o'clock in the morning Sheppard and his gang being about the door, a maid-servant went to listen, and heard one of the wretches say, "Damn him, if they could not enter that night, they would another, and would have £300 of his money." They then went off, and nothing was heard of them till Sunday, the 12th of July following, when Joseph Blake, *alias* Blueskin, John Sheppard, and William Field, (as he himself swore), came about twelve o'clock at night, and cut two large oaken bars over the cellar window at the back part of the house in little Drury lane, and so entered. Mr. Kneebone and his family being at rest, they proceeded to open the door at the foot of the cellar stairs, with three bolts and a large padlock upon it; and then came into the shop, and wrenched off a hasp and padlock that went over the press, and arrived at their desired booty; they continued in the house three hours, and carried off with them 108 yards of broad woollen cloth, 5 yards of blue baize, a little tie wig, a beaver hat, two silver spoons, a handkerchief and penknife, in all to the amount of £50.

The Sunday following, Sheppard and Blueskin were out upon the Hampstead road and there stopped a coach with a lady's maid in it, from whom they took only half-a-crown, being all the money about her. The footman behind the coach came down and exerted himself, but Sheppard most unceremoniously planted a pistol to his breast, which was received as a hint that prudence would be the best part of his valour.

Next night, about nine o'clock, they robbed Mr. Pargiter,

of Hampstead, near the half-way house. Sheppard, after his being taken at Finchley, was particularly examined about this robbery. The Rev. Mr. Wagstaff received a letter from an unknown hand, with some questions to be proposed to Sheppard; viz,—Whether he did not rob one Mr. Pargiter, on Monday, the 20th of July, about nine at night, between the turnpike and Hampstead? How much money he took from him? Whether Pargiter was drunk or not; and if he had any rings or watch about him when robbed? He said Pargiter was very much in liquor, having a great coat, neither rings on his finger, nor watch, and only 3s. in his pocket, which they took from him; and that Blueskin knocked him down twice with the end of his pistol, but Sheppard did in kindness raise him up as often.

On the 21st they stopped a stage coach, and took from one of the passengers in it 20s., and where so expeditious in the matter, that scarcely a word was spoken. Now Mr. Sheppard's long and wicked course was seemingly drawing to a close. Mr. Kneebone having applied to Jonathan Wild, and put advertisements in the papers, complaining of his robbery; on Tuesday the 22nd of July, at night, Edgeworth Bess was taken in a brandy shop, near Temple Bar, by Jonathan Wild, she being much terrified, discovered where Sheppard was. A warrant was accordingly issued by Justice Blackerby, and the next day he was apprehended at the house of Blueskin's mother, in Rosemary Lane, by one Quilt, a domestic of Wild's, though not without great opposition, for he presented a loaded pistol to Quilt's breast, and attempted to shoot him, but the pistol missed fire. He was brought back to the New Prison, confined in the dungeon, and next day brought before Justice Blackerby. Upon his examination he con-

caused the three robberies on the highway beforementioned
 also his robbing Mr. Baynes, Mr. Burton, and Mr.
 Kneebone. He was committed to Newgate, and at the
 ensuing sessions at the Old Bailey, he took his trial. The
 facts being clearly proved, sentence of death was pro-
 nounced upon him accordingly. He begged hard for
 transportation to the remotest part of his majesty's do-
 minions, and pleaded youth and ignorance as the motives
 which precipitated him unto guilt; but the court, deaf to
 his importunities, knowing his repeated crimes to be equally
 flagrant, gave him no satisfactory answer. He returned
 to his dismal abode, the condemned hole, where were nine
 more unhappy wretches in as dreadful circumstances as
 himself. The king being at Windsor the malefactors had
 a longer respite than is usual. During the recess, James
 Harman, Lumey, Davies, and Sheppard agreed upon an
 escape, concerted measures, and provided instruments to
 make it effectual; but these men put off the execution of
 their design, on account of having their hopes of life re-
 newed by the favourable answers they received daily from
 considerable persons, but those vanished before the day
 of execution, and finding their sentence irreversible, they
 dropped all their hopes, together with the design they had
 formed for an escape, and so earnestly prepared to meet
 death on the morrow, which they accordingly did. It was
 on this day that Davies gave Sheppard the watch-springs,
 files, saws, &c., to effect his own release; and knowing
 that a warrant was hourly expected for his execution with
 two others, and the very day of the execution of the former
 while they were having their fetters taken off, in order
 for going to the tree, that day he began to saw. On Mon-
 day the death warrant came from Windsor, appointing
 that he, together with Joseph Ward and Anthony Upton.

should be executed on the Friday following. The keepers conveyed him therewith, and desired him to make good use of the short time allotted him; he thanked them, and said, *he would follow their advice and prepare!* Margaretta Bess and another woman had been with him at the door of the condemned hold the greatest part of the afternoon; between five and six o'clock he desired the other prisoners, except Stephen Fowles, to remain above while he offered something in private to his friends at the door. They complied, and in the interval he got the spike removed, which made way for him to pass with his heels foremost, by the assistance of Fowles, whom he most ungenerously betrayed to the keepers after his being retaken, and the fellow was severely punished for it.

Having now got clear of his prison, he took coach, dressed in a night gown, at the corner of the Old Bailey, along with a man who waited for him in the street; and ordered the coachman to drive to Blackfriars-stairs, where his friend gave him the meeting; and the three took boat and crossed the shore at the horse-ferry, at Westminster; and at the White Hart, they went in and drank, and stayed some time; from whence they adjourned to a place in Helborn where, by the help of a saw, he quitted the chains he had brought from Newgate, and then, like a free man, took a ramble through the city, and came to Spitalfields, and there met his favourite Bess.

It may be easy to imagine what an alarm his escape gave the keepers of Newgate, three of their people being at the farther end of the lodge, engaged in a discourse concerning his wonderful escape from the New Prison and what caution ought to be used lest he should give them the slip, at the very instant he effected it.

On Monday, he sent for William Page, an apprentice

to a butcher on Clare-market, who came to him; and being penniless, he desired Page to give him what assistance he could to make his way. Before he could do anything he consulted a near relation, who, he said, put him up to it; so meeting with success on application to his friend, and probably with assistance for the pocket, he came to Sheppard having bought him a new blue butcher's frock, and another for himself, and soon both took their route to Worden, in Northamptonshire, where they came to a relation of Page's, who received and entertained them kindly, the people lying from their own bed to accomodate them. Sheppard pretended to be a butcher's son of Clare-market, who was going further into the country to his friends, and that Page was so kind as to accompany him; but they as well as their friend, became tired of one another, the butcher having but one shilling left, and the people poor, and consequently unable to subsist two such fellows. After a stay of three or four days, they returned and came to London, calling by the way of *Black Mary's Hole*, and drinking with several of their acquaintance, then came into Bishopgate street, to Cooley's brandy-shop where a cobber at work in his stall alarmed our hero, by pointing him out as Jack Sheppard; he hearing him departed immediately. In the evening they came into Fleet street about eight o'clock, and observing Martin's watchmaker's shop, to be kept by a little boy, Page went in and asked the lad whether Mr. Taylor, a watchmaker, lodged in the house? Being answered in the negative he came away, and reported the disposition of the place. Sheppard now made trial of his old master-piece, fixed a gimlet into the door post, broke the glass, and took out three silver watches of £15 value. The boy saw him take them, but could not get out pursue him by reason o'

his contrivance; one of the watches he pledged for a guinea and a half. The same night they came to Wych-street. Sheppard went to the Cock and Pye alehouse in Drury-lane, sent for an acquaintance, and drank brandy, and ate oysters in view of several people, Page waiting all the while at the door, the whole neighbourhood being alarmed yet none daring to attack him for fear. He had vowed revenge upon a poor man, that kept a dairy cellar, at the end of Whitehorse-yard, who having seen him at Islington after his escape, and engaged not to speak of it broke his promise; whereupon Sheppard went to his residence, took the door off the hinges, and threw it down among the man's pans and pipkins, and caused a deluge of cream and milk to flow about the cellar.

Ireton, a sheriff-officer, saw him and Page together and gave them pursuit, from which they had an hair-breadth escape. Ireton having laid hold of Page instead of Sheppard, who got off.

About this time Edgworth Bess was apprehended by Jonathan Wild, and committed to the Poultry-compter, by Sir Francis Forbes, one of the aldermen of London, for aiding and assisting Sheppard in his escape; the keepers and others terrified her as much as possible, to discover where he was; but, had she been put to the rack, as in days of old, she could not have helped her enquirers.

The people about the, Wych-street, and Drury-lane, whome he had robbed, and who had prosecuted him, were under great apprehension and terror; and in particular Mr. Kneebone, on whom he vowed revenge because he lately refused to sign a petition in his behalf to the Recorder of London. This gentleman was forced to keep armed people up in his house every night, till he was retaken, and had the same fortified in the strongest manner.

The keepers of Newgate, whom the world loaded with infamy, stigmatize and branded with the title of persons guilty of bribery, for conniving at his escape, contributed their utmost to undeceive a wrong-notioned people. Their diligence was indefatigable, sparing neither money nor time, night nor day, to bring him back to his deserved justice. After much intelligence, which they bought or received, they got some which proved very successful; having learnt for certain that his haunts were Finchley Common, and being very well assured of the house where he lay; on Thursday, the 10th of September, a number of men, both of spirit and conduct, furnished with arms proper for their design, went to Finchley, some in a coach and four, and others on horseback; they dispersed themselves about the Common aforesaid, in order to take their view; they had not long been there before they saw Sheppard and Page together, habited like two butchers, in blue frocks, with aprons tucked round their waists, and talking as large as life, as butchers, even when killing, do, of their fine wethers, their prime corn beef, and their bets at the coming cock-pit. But all their guesses would not do; for Sheppard, who recognized Langley, one of the turnkeys of Newgate, said to Page, "hold your eye, I spy a stag." Upon which their courage dropped, knowing that their wicked way of business must come to an end. To make their flight as secure as they could, they thought it advisable to take to a foot-path to cut off the pursuit of the Newgate cavalry, but this did not prove successful. Mr. Langley came up with Page, who was on horseback, and dismounting, with pistol in hand, commanded him to throw up his hands which he tremblingly did, begging for life, desiring him to *spare him*, (*anglice*, search him) which he accordingly did, and found a broad knife, and a pistol;

having thus disarmed him, he takes the club along with him in quest of clever Jack, who had taken shelter in an old stable belonging to a farm-house; the pursuit was close, the house invested, and a girl seeing his feet, she discovered him. Mr. Austin, a turnkey, first attacked his person, Mr. Langley seconded him, and Ireton, the officer, brought in the finish. He being shocked with fear, told them he submitted, and desired they would let him live as long as he could. Upon searching him they found a broad-knife, with two of the watches he had taken out of Mr. Martin's shop, one under each arm-pit. They adjourned with their prisoners to a place where there was a coach and four waiting to convey them to town with speed and safety, and Sheppard arrived at his old mansion at about two in the afternoon. At his alighting he made a sudden spring, his intention being, he said to have slipped under the coach, and had a race for it. He was put into the condemned hold, and chained down to the floor with double basils upon his feet, &c.

The joy of the people of Newgate on this occasion was inexpressible, and nothing but smiles and bumpers were seen in the lodge for many days together; but Jonathan Wild happened to be gone on a wrong scent after him to Stourbridge, lost a share of the glory.

On Wednesday October the 14th, the sessions began at the Old Bailey, and Jack aware that the keepers would then have so much business in attending the court, as to leave them but little leisure to visit him, thought this would be the only time to make a push for his liberty.

The next day about two in the afternoon, one of the keepers carried Jack his dinner, and as usual, examined his irons, and found all fast, and so left him. He had hardly been gone when Jack went to work. He first got

off his handcuffs, and then with a crooked nail which he found upon the floor, opened the great padlock, that fastened his chain to the staple. Next he twisted asunder a small link of the chain between his legs, and drawing up his feet-locks as high as he could, he made them fast with his garters. He attempted to get up the chimney, but had not advanced far, before his progress was stopped by an iron bar that went across the flue ; this compelled him to descend ; he then set to work on the outside, and with a piece of his broken chain, picked out the mortar, and removed a small stone or two, about six feet from the floor. He got out the iron bar which was an inch square, and near a yard long, and this proved of great service to him. He presently made so large a breach, that he got into the Red Room over the Castle ; here he found a great nail, which was another very useful implement. This room had remained shut for seven years ; but in less than seven minutes he wrenched off the lock, and got into an entry leading to the chapel. Here he found a door bolted on the other side, upon which he broke a hole through the wall, and pushed the bolt back. Coming now to the chapel door, he broke off one of the iron spikes, which he kept for farther use, and thus got into the entry between the chapel and lower leads. The door of this entry was very strong, and fastened with a strong lock ; and what was worse, the night had overtaken him, and he was forced to work in the dark. However, in half an hour, by the help of the great nail, he forced off the box of the lock, and opened the door, which led him to another difficult ; for it was not only locked, but barred and bolted. When he had tried in vain to make the lock and bolt give way, he wrenched the fillet from the main post of the door, and the box and staples came off with it ; and St. Scoulchre's

chimney went eight. There was yet another door between him and the lower leads, but it being only bolted within side, he opened it easily, and mounting the top of it, he got over the wall and on the upper leads, and once more breathed the open air.

How to get down was his next difficulty, and on looking around from his elevated position, he resolved, as his only apparent mode of descent, to get down on the Turner's house, adjoining Newgate; but as this would have been a dangerous leap, he went to the castle the same way he came, and fetched a blanket he used to lie upon. This he made fast to the wall of Newgate with the spike he stole out of the chapel, and sliding down, dropped upon the turner's leads, and then the clock struck nine.

It is uncertain where he took up his lodging for the remaining part of the night, or rather morning; or when or how he got the irons off his legs; but, on the first of November, not only his feet-locks, but his hand-cuffs too, were found in a room belonging to Kate Cook and Kate Keys, in Cranbourn-alley.

Great numbers came to Newgate to behold Sheppard's workmanship; and Mr. Pitt and his officers very readily conducted them up stairs, that the world might be convinced there was not the least room to suspect either negligence or connivance in the servants. Every one expressed the greatest surprise imaginable; and declared themselves satisfied with the measures they had taken for his security. One of the Sheriffs came in person, and went up to the Castle to be satisfied with the situation of the place, attended by several of the city officers.

The court being set at the Sessions-house, the keepers were sent for and examined. The magistrate expressed great surprise that so horrid

woman had escaped justice, having intimated that he should be brought down to the court the next day of the sessions, and ordered for execution in two or three days after, if it appeared he was the person condemned for breaking open Mr. Knoebone's house, and had been ordered for execution. He undoubtedly performed the chief part of his escape in the darkest part of the night, and without the least glimpse of a candle. In a word he actually did with his own hands, in a few hours, what several of the most skilful artists alive could not have been accomplished by a number of persons, furnished with proper implements and all other advantages, in a full day.

Never was there anything better timed. The keepers and their assistants, been obliged to give a close attendance on the sessions of the Old Bailey and Blueskin having confined Wild to his chamber by stabbing him, at the time of his trial, a more favourable opportunity could not have presented itself for Sheppard's purposes.

On the 31st, he dined with his two female friends, Cook and Keys, at a public-house in Newgate street, where they were very merry together. About five in the afternoon, they took coach, and drawing up the windows, passed through Newgate, which then was similar to Temple Bar, and so to the Shearsalehouse, in May-pole in Clare-market.

where in the evening he sent for his mother, and treated her with some brandy. As she knew the danger he was in, she advised him to take care of himself, and keep out of the way; but Jack had been drinking pretty hard, and had grown too wise to take counsel, and too valiant, to fear anything; and, therefore, leaving his mother, he strolled about in the neighbourhood from alehouse to gin-shop, till near 12 o'clock, when he was apprehended by means of an alehouse boy, who had accidentally seen him. Poor Jack was taken drunk unable to make any resistance, and was once more conveyed to Newgate.

The 10th of November he was carried of the King's Bench Bar, at Westminster, where the record of his conviction being read, and an affidavit made that he was the same John Sheppard mentioned in that record, Mr Justice Power awarded sentence of death against him, and a rule of court was made for his execution the Monday following. Jack, even on his last day, had some hopes of eluding justice. Some cove had furnished him with a penknife, which he put naked into his pocket, with the point upwards; and he told one whom he thought he could trust, his design was to lean forward in the cart, and cut asunder the cord that tied his hands together, and then when he came near Little Turnstile, to throw himself over amongst the crowd, and run through the narrow passage, where the officers could not follow him on horseback, but must be forced to dismount and, in the meantime, doubted not but by the mob's assistance he should make his escape. But his hopeful scheme was discovered in the press-yard in Newgate just as he was going into the cart; though it was not prevented without the loss

of some blood. An officer, incautiously examining Jack's pockets, cut himself.

Sheppard had still another project in his head. He earnestly desired some of his acquaintance, that after his body was cut down, they would as soon as possible put it into a warm bed, and try to let him bleed, for he said he believed if such care was taken, they might bring him to life again.

At the place of execution he behaved himself very gravely; confessed, in particular, that he robbed Mr Phillips and Mrs Cook, though for the want of proper evidence the jury had acquitted him of both; and he declared that when he and Blue-skin robbed Mr. Kneebone, William Field was not with them.

He was hanged at Tyburn, on Monday, November 16th, 1724, in the 23rd year of his age. He died with great difficulty, and much pitted by the mob. When he had hung about a quarter of an hour, he was cut down by a soldier, and delivered to his friends, who carried him to the Barley-mow, in Long-acre, and he was buried the same evening in St. Martin's church-yard.





